

Playbooks & Data Briefs

Six field-tested playbooks and three data briefs on the practice of social search — the operating model behind the pods we run for D2C, B2B SaaS, creators and local brands.

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TikTok SEO

- TikTok search now indexes captions, on-screen text, hashtags and spoken audio. Optimise all four.
- Seed 12 queries from the search bar's auto-suggest. Group them into 3 clusters. Each cluster gets a hero video, three utility videos, one remix.
- First 1.5 seconds decide rank stability — hook + on-screen keyword front-loaded.
- Weekly Share-of-Discovery report: which of your target queries you rank top-3 for, tracked over 90 days.

Instagram SEO in 2026

- Instagram search now behaves like a lightweight Google. Handle, name field, bio, alt text and first-line captions all rank.
- Cover art is a search surface: the on-screen text is what the algorithm reads first.
- Save-rate is the strongest 'useful to me' signal on the platform — design carousels to be saved.
- Kill the 30-hashtag habit. 3–5 tight, on-topic tags outperform for both discovery and comment quality.

The LinkedIn Founder-Brand System

- Founder posts convert 8–12× the company page. Every B2B SaaS growth chart eventually depends on one.
- Three post formats on a Mon–Wed–Fri cadence: POV, teardown, mini-case. Ghostwriter frames — never voices.
- Document carousels using real screenshots of the product doing the work. Zero stock illustration.
- SDR briefing loop: cold outbound quotes the founder's own posts. Reply rate 2.4× baseline.

The Weekly Reels System

- Six-Reel week: 2 hero, 3 utility, 1 remix. Anything more burns the pod; anything less loses rank.
- Shot list before script. Script before caption. Caption before cover. Cover before publish.
- Batch shoot day, batch edit day, publish across the week. Solo creator or 10-person team — same rhythm.
- Every Reel has one saveable line. If it doesn't, don't publish.

Influencer briefs that ship

- One-page brief, always. Any brief that runs long doesn't run.
- Search-intent hook, not aesthetic mood: brief the query the creator's post should answer.
- Two mandatories, three freedoms — creators do their best work in the freedoms.
- Deliverables defined in usage rights, not just post count.

Community as retention

- Community isn't a marketing channel. It's the retention layer that compounds every other spend.
- First-hour DM reply as an SLA. Escalation ladder to founders for anything reaction-adjacent.
- Broadcast Channels for restocks and reminders — never promotions. Trust is the asset.
- Weekly 'question of the week' Reel answers the question hitting DMs the most. Loop closes.

State of Social Search 2026

- 57% of Gen Z start product research inside TikTok or Instagram, not Google.
- Pinterest owns 4.2× the outbound-click rate of Instagram for D2C.
- LinkedIn's founder-search index has tripled in indexed pages since 2023.
- YouTube Shorts CTR into long-form averages 6.2% when thumbnails are matched.

Engagement Benchmarks by Platform

- IG Reels median engagement rate: 1.9% (D2C), 2.4% (creator), 0.8% (B2B).
- TikTok median completion rate: 42% across all industries. Top decile: 68%+.
- LinkedIn document carousels median dwell: 1m 18s. Text-only posts: 22s.
- Pinterest save-rate median: 0.7%. Top decile: 3.1%+.

HOW RANK TURNS INTO A SHARE NUMBER

Share of Discovery — methodology

- Define a keyword panel: 12–24 queries per platform, mixed head + long-tail, buyer-intent only.
- Poll each platform's native search weekly, log top-10 positions per query.
- Weighted score: position 1 = 10 pts, position 2 = 7, position 3 = 5, positions 4–10 = 3.
- Your Share-of-Discovery = your points ÷ total possible. Reported monthly, compared to 3 category peers.

One-page platform checklists

Instagram

- Handle contains category keyword
- Bio: role + geo + keyword
- Alt text on every post
- First-line caption = search phrase
- Cover text large + legible on grid

TikTok

- Hook + keyword in first 1.5s
- On-screen text repeats keyword
- Caption: query + secondary phrase
- 3 tight hashtags, no dumping
- Reply to every top-10 comment

LinkedIn

- Headline is a POV, not a title
- About = story + proof + CTA
- Featured section = 3 best posts
- Document carousel weekly
- Comment first 60 min post-publish

YouTube

- Title = query verbatim in first 60 chars
- Thumb CTR target: 5%+
- Chapters every 90s
- Shorts pointing at long-form
- Community poll for next topic

Pinterest

- Board names include query
- 2:3 vertical pins only
- Rich pins wired to product
- Seasonal 90 days ahead
- Fresh pin daily on hero board

X (Twitter)

- Reply to 3 anchor accounts daily
- Long-form threads Mon + Thu
- First tweet is the hook
- Screenshot replies to own tweets
- Bio: what you do + who for

Colophon

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